

family that worked hard to fund his early music education. Those efforts and Wilson's inherent talents helped turn the child prodigy into an internationally renowned classical pianist.

Eager to listen to the youngster in concert, the excitement over Wilson's early success opened the world of classical music to new fans of all ages and classes. He would go on to amass numerous distinctions, including winning the top prize at the Luis Ferre International Concerto Competition and earning performances at places like New York's Carnegie Hall, Puerto Rico's Centro de Bellas Artes, and el Gran Teatro del Cibao in the Dominican Republic.

While he performed around the world, Wilson was never too far away from New York and his Dominican traditions. He was a shining example of the best that our community can produce and an example to our youth that any dream is possible, in any field or industry.

My heartfelt condolences go to his family, friends and colleagues. Though saddened by not being able to see this young man reach his full potential, we are all blessed to have enjoyed his talent during his brief time here on earth.

CELEBRATING THE COMPLETION
OF THE VILLAGE COMMONS
COMMUNITY CENTER AT FORT
CAMPBELL

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Ms. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to celebrate the opening of the Village Commons Community Center at Fort Campbell in my district in Tennessee.

This is a great day for so many of our military families. We know our service men and women face many challenges as they work to defend America. That's why this new facility with an exercise room, amphitheater, and coffee shop to name just a few features is so important. It adds to the quality of life in a very fundamental way.

To date this is one of the most extensive military housing programs developed through the cooperation of the Department of Defense and private donors. It's a real credit to the Fort Campbell community that this project has been completed.

An element of this effort I especially want to note though is the addition of a wheelchair accessible playground. Mr. Speaker, this will give those soldiers wounded while defending our country the opportunity to spend time with their children. I know that will mean so much to them and all of us are grateful this program is now a reality.

PRAISE OF VOTING RIGHTS ACT
PASSAGE

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in praise of the hard work of our colleagues here in the House and the Senate for

extending for another twenty-five years the Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act. I thank the President for signing the bill into law yesterday. In addition, I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of those individuals whose work has ensured that the tradition of its creators is not forgotten.

It was the combined efforts of civil rights leaders—activists like Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks and both Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King Jr.; political leaders in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations; and our esteemed colleague, JOHN LEWIS, who put his life on the line when he crossed the Edmund Pettis Bridge in Selma, Alabama on Bloody Sunday—these are some of the people who made the Voting Rights Act a reality. It is in the memory of their political courage and stewardship of democracy that I joined with my colleagues to ensure its continuation.

What we have seen in the past months is another pivotal step toward the realization of Dr. King's dream for an equal America. From my own work with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, I understand many of the obstacles Dr. King faced in overcoming adversity for the disenfranchised. I am honored and humbled to be one of many to continue what he worked so hard to begin.

The right to vote is among the most sacred of freedoms. Dr. King is just one of many Americans who paid the ultimate price, so that all can have a voice. The Voting Rights Act honors that tradition by ensuring that all Americans have equal access to the ballot box and refusing to allow discrimination of the past to be a part of our future.

Mr. Speaker, the Congress has made its will and that of the country known. We have ensured that all Americans will continue to have a voice and generations to come will go on to make Dr. King's dream of an equal America a reality.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA GREGORY

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary woman and distinguished labor leader, Linda Gregory, on the occasion of the San Mateo County Central Labor Council honoring her at their Annual COPE Banquet on August 18, 2006.

Linda Gregory was born in Seattle, Washington and as a young child moved with her family to Sacramento, California, where she was raised in a working class family. When she was 18, Linda married Richard, and together they had four children: Robyn, Aaron, Sarah, and Benjamin.

Mrs. Gregory's passion for social reform began early in life when her husband, a Sacramento social worker, went on strike. At the time, there was no law that recognized public employee unions or the right to collectively bargain. Richard and 300 other employees lost their jobs, and this experience had a profound effect on the rest of the Gregory's personal and professional lives.

In 1968, Linda began her career in the public sector. She first worked as a junior clerk for

Santa Clara County where she became an active member in SEIU Local 715.

Linda Gregory rose through the ranks at SEIU Local 715. She began as a Shop Steward which motivated her involvement with political action. Because of her exceptional leadership abilities, she became an officer of the local union and she was later hired as a Research Director.

In 1975, Linda Gregory began working as a Business Agent for AFSCME Council 57. She has held the position of Associate Director for decades, representing public employees working for the County, City and hospitals. Throughout her AFSCME career Linda Gregory has not only represented employees, she has also negotiated hundreds of contracts and conducted strategic planning meetings for AFSCME local unions throughout Northern California.

One of her greatest achievements while working for AFSCME was the comparable pay campaign. The goal of the campaign was to provide equal pay to people with different job titles based on their value to their employer, regardless of any gender predominance in such positions. Because of Linda Gregory's leadership, dedication and hard work, California public employees were the first in the nation to earn comparable pay for comparable work.

Linda Gregory has devoted almost three decades of her life to helping the American worker. In addition to her position at Council 57, she is also the President of the San Mateo Labor Council where she has been active for over twenty years and held an executive position since the late 1970's.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a national treasure, an exemplary American and a special friend. As the San Mateo County Central Labor Council celebrates the achievements of Linda Gregory at their 27th Annual C.O.P.E. banquet, we extend to her our best wishes as well as our gratitude for all she has accomplished for our region, our nation, and the American worker. Her leadership has set the gold standard for workers, and because of her enlightened leadership, we are a better community and a stronger country.

IN RECOGNITION OF ROBERT P.
KASSIN

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, Sergeant Robert P. Kassin, 29, born in Flint, Michigan, died on July 16, 2006, in Afghanistan. Sergeant Kassin was assigned to the Army's C Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division at Fort Polk, Louisiana, and according to initial reports was killed due to injuries when his dismounted patrol came under small arms fire. His survivors include his wife Judy; his two step-daughters; his son; and his mother and father Robert Joseph and Lucia Kassin of Clovis, New Mexico.

Robert Kassin was a proud father and husband, and from a young age expressed a desire to serve his country in uniform. Like all soldiers, he dutifully left behind his family and loved ones to serve our country overseas.